

CLASSIFICATION ~~CONFIDENTIAL/SECURITY INFORMATION~~

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO.

25x1

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY Latvia (Latvian SSR)

DATE DISTR. 26 Mar 1953

SUBJECT Tosmares Shipyard Installations and Activities

NO OF PAGES 2

PLACE
ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS. 1
(LISTED BELOW)

25X1

DATE
ACQUIRED BY SOURCE

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

25X1

DATE of Information

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECTING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES. WITHIN THE MEANING OF TITLE 18, SECTIONS 793 AND 794, OF THE U.S. CODE, AS AMENDED ITS TRANSMISSION OR COMMUNICATION OF ITS CONTENTS TO OR RECEIPT BY AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON IS PROHIBITED BY LAW. THE REPRODUCTION OF THIS FORM IS PROHIBITED.

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

SOURCE

25X1

1. Q. Describe the general location and installations at Posmares shipyard.
 - A. The Posmares yard is located north of the city of Liepaja, adjacent to the northern city limits, on an artificial inlet, constructed in 1900. The yard is about 3/4 of a mile square, has two dry-docks, built on a north-south axis. The docks are slightly over 600 feet long, approximately 90 feet wide, and exactly 30 feet from waterline to keel blocks. The drydocks can accommodate vessels up to 18,000 tons. However, I recall that during the Soviet occupation of 1940, the cruiser Kirov called at Liepaja but would not quite fit in the drydocks because of length. Comment: Critchell Rimington's Fighting Fleets, (New York, Dodd, Mead & Co, 1944) describes the Kirov as a USSR heavy cruiser, completed in 1937, with an estimated displacement of 8,800 tons, and quoted dimensions of 627' 3" x 64' x 17'. The Kirov and a sister-ship, the Maksim Gorki are listed as assigned to the Soviet Baltic Sea fleet. Each drydock has a ten-ton-capacity crane on each side. The channel from the drydocks to the Baltic Sea is 27 feet deep, but must occasionally be dredged at the inlet entrance owing to silt deposits.
2. Q. How many people did the yard employ?
 - A. About 1500 in 1939, and from 2000 to 2500 from 1940 to 1944.
3. Q. What types of building and repairs were conducted at the yard?
 - A. No construction was initiated between 1939 and late 1944. Prior to World War II the yard built fishing vessels and small coastal steamers. The yard has all the requisite construction facilities to operate a building program. During the Soviet occupation of 1940-1941, we conducted external repairs on Soviet submarines and warships, mostly in the destroyer and frigate classes.

25X1

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENTIAL/SECURITY INFORMATION

CLASSIFICATION						CONFIDENTIALITY GROUPING	DISTRIBUTION	INSTRUCTIONS
STATE AIR	X	FBI	X					
ARMY REC	X	Navy EV	X					

CONFIDENTIAL/SECURITY INFORMATION

25X1

- 2 -

4. Q. Could the existing facilities of the yard be expanded?

A. Yes. Plans had already been drawn up in late 1939 to extend both drydocks about 200 feet. No widening was contemplated, and owing to the docks' proximity to each other probably would not be feasible anyway. The lengthening process could be accomplished fairly easily however.

5. Q. What were some of the defects you noted in Soviet warships repaired in the yard?

A. I understand there are six weight classes of Soviet submarines. They are 150 tons, 250 tons, 500 tons, 750 tons, 1000 tons and 1500 tons. During 1940, 150 ton, 250 ton, 750 ton and 1500 ton submarines were repaired at Liepaja. Although Latvians were permitted inside Nazi warships during the German occupation, the Soviets never permitted a Latvian inside of one of their craft, so most of our repairs were conducted on the exterior of some ships. When a Diesel engine needed changing, a special Soviet crew was brought in from the USSR to remove the engine from the ship under repair and transport it to the Diesel shop for repairs by Latvians under Soviet surveillance. External repairs consisted of re-welding spring plates. On the smaller submarines, there was evidence of poor plate construction. Some of the submarines also suffered from chronic rudder trouble, and difficulty with the water ejection system which pumps the ballast tanks. There was some talk by Soviet crewmen of chlorination pollution of the submarine from the batteries, but their tones were not alarmist.

6. Q. Describe the condition of the shipyard when you left

25X1

A. The shipyard was virtually undamaged by the evacuating Soviet and Nazi armies in the period 1940 to 1945. Although the Nazis planned to raze the yard prior to their retreat from the city in 1945, I understand from friends that they never had the chance owing to the rapid Soviet advance.

7. Q. Comment on any other installations of significance at the yard.

A. As you will note in the diagram [See Enclosure (A)] there are adequate installations for all types of repairs. In addition, the yard acquired an 800 ton floating drydock in 1943, which apparently was not scuttled in 1945 as intended. The yard had one other floating drydock of 300 tons, also reported undamaged in 1945.

8. Q. What was the calibre of Soviet conduct and administration during the USSR occupation of 1940-1941?

A. Soviet administration was frantic and disorganized in 1940. Confusion, duplication of effort, and suspicion of sabotage were rampant throughout the Soviet visitation. Every failure or mistake was met with the Soviet charge of "fascist sabotage." The Soviet Commandant used the threat of imprisonment constantly until he realized that the exhausted Latvian workers under his rule had reached the point where they welcomed incarceration as an opportunity to escape Soviet authority.

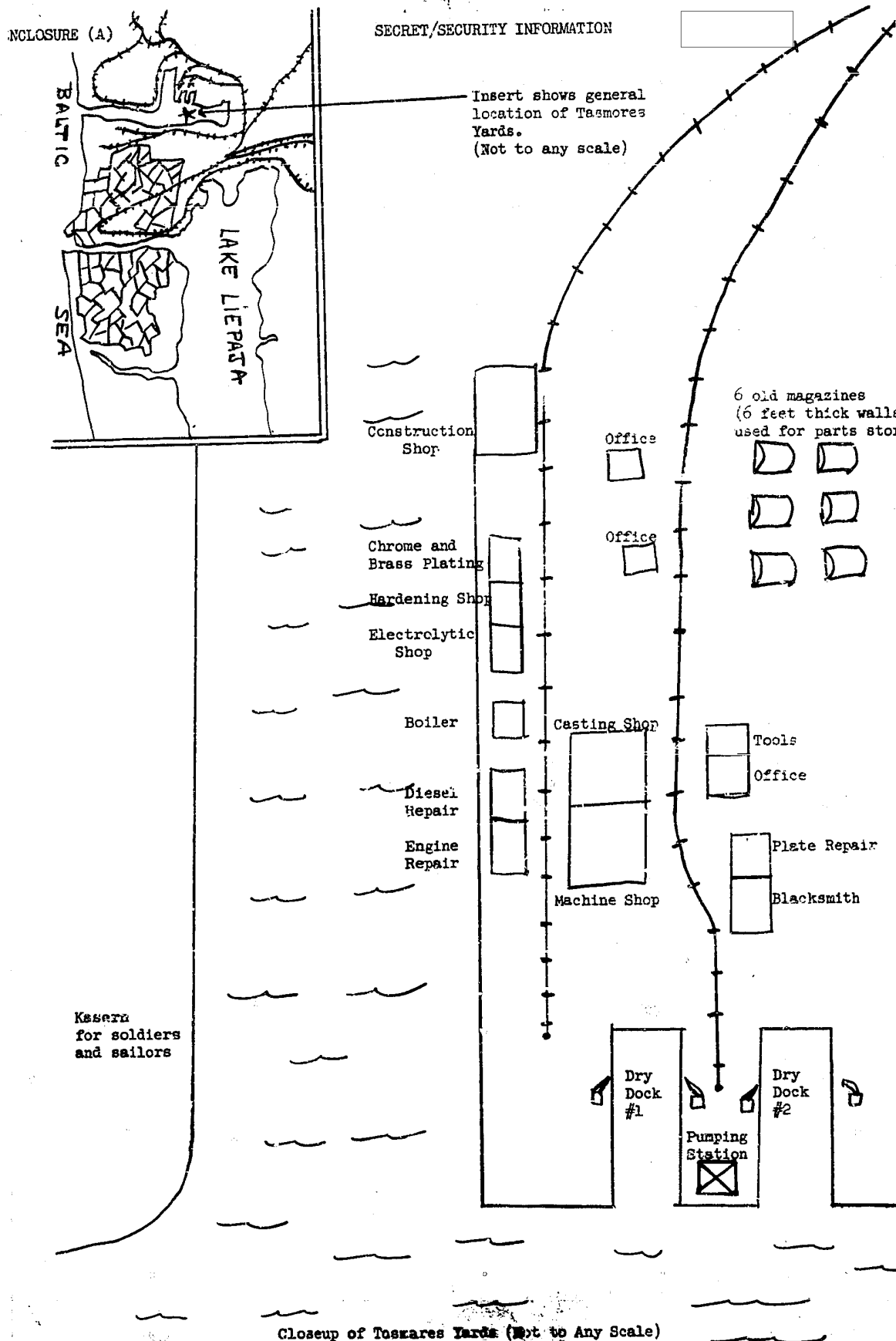
[Available for inspection and selection at the CIA Graphics Register is a 3" x 5" photograph of a Tosmares drydock.]

- end -

ENCLOSURE (A): Mat with insert of Liepaja (to no scale) showing the location of Tosmares yard, and a close-up sketch (to no scale) of yard facilities.

CONFIDENTIAL/SECURITY INFORMATION

25X1



SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION